

ready to destroy it, they preferred the foreigners, the friends of the Bourbons, to Napoleon, who might still have prolonged the struggle, but that he alone would not find means to save them and erect the edifice of liberty. The Chamber of Peers presented a much sadder spectacle. Except the intrepid Thibaudeau, who till the last moment expressed himself with admirable energy against the Bourbons, almost all the others thought of nothing else but getting out of the dilemma with the least loss they could. Some took no pains to hide their wish of bending again under the Bourbon yoke."

On the evening of Napoleon's return to Paris he sent for Benjamin Constant to come to him at the Elysee about seven o'clock. The Chambers had decreed their permanence, and proposals for abdication had reached the Emperor. He was serious but calm. In reply to some words on the disaster of Waterloo he said, " The question no longer concerns me, but France. They wish me to abdicate\*. Have they calculated upon the inevitable consequences of this abdication ? It is round me, round my name, that the army rallies: to separate me from it is to disband it. If I abdicate to-day, in two days<sup>7</sup> time you will no longer have an army. Those poor fellows do not understand all your subtleties. Is it believed that axioms in metaphysics, declarations of right, harangues from the tribune, will put a stop to the disbanding of an army ? To reject me when I landed at Cannes I can conceive possible ; to abandon me now is what I do not understand. It is not when the enemy is at twenty-five leagues' distance that any Government can be overturned with impunity. Does any one imagine that the Foreign Powers will be won over by fine words? If they had dethroned me fifteen days ago there would have\* been Home spirit in it; but as it is, I make part of what strangers attack, I make part, then, of what France is bound to defend. In giving me up she gives up herself, she avowH her weakness, she acknowledges herself conquered, she courts the insolence of the conqueror. It is not the love of liberty which deposes me, but Waterloo; it is fear, and a fear of which your enemies will take advantage. And then what title has the Chamber to demand my abdication ? It goes out